

Abstract

THESIS PROJECT: Examining the Neural Underpinnings of the Congeniality Bias

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Individuals often exhibit a systematic preference for decision consistent information, a phenomenon known as the congeniality bias. The current study utilized event related potential methodology to investigate the neural underpinnings of the congeniality bias by examining the cognitive resources devoted to processing decision consistent and decision inconsistent information. Results revealed participants devoted substantially more attentional resources to processing decision consistent information during the decision making process. This finding supports the role of a defensive motivation, driven by a desire to maintain cognitive consistency, in the congeniality bias. Discussion concerns implications for interventions designed to reduce the strength of congeniality bias by altering the allocation of attentional resources during decision making.